

Excerpt of Shakespeare's Henry V – St. Crispin's Day

What's he that wishes so?
My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin;
If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires.
But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.

No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England.
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more methinks would share from me
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
And crowns for convoy put into his purse;
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.

Key Words:

Summary:

Key Words:

Summary:

This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispian's day.'

Key Words:

Summary:

Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words-
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester-
Be in their flowing cups freshly rememb'red.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

Key Words:

Summary:

For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Key Words:

Summary:

Caroline Kennedy, daughter of President John F. Kennedy, wrote that both her parents loved to read Shakespeare:

“While my mother was drawn to the love poetry, my father preferred the history plays. One of his favorite phrases was Henry V’s St. Crispin’s Day speech. It describes the honor of having risked one’s life for one’s country at a moment when it truly mattered. When my mother planned an evening of Elizabethan poetry and music at the White house, as a surprise for my father, she ended that evening’s program with the speech from *Henry V*.”

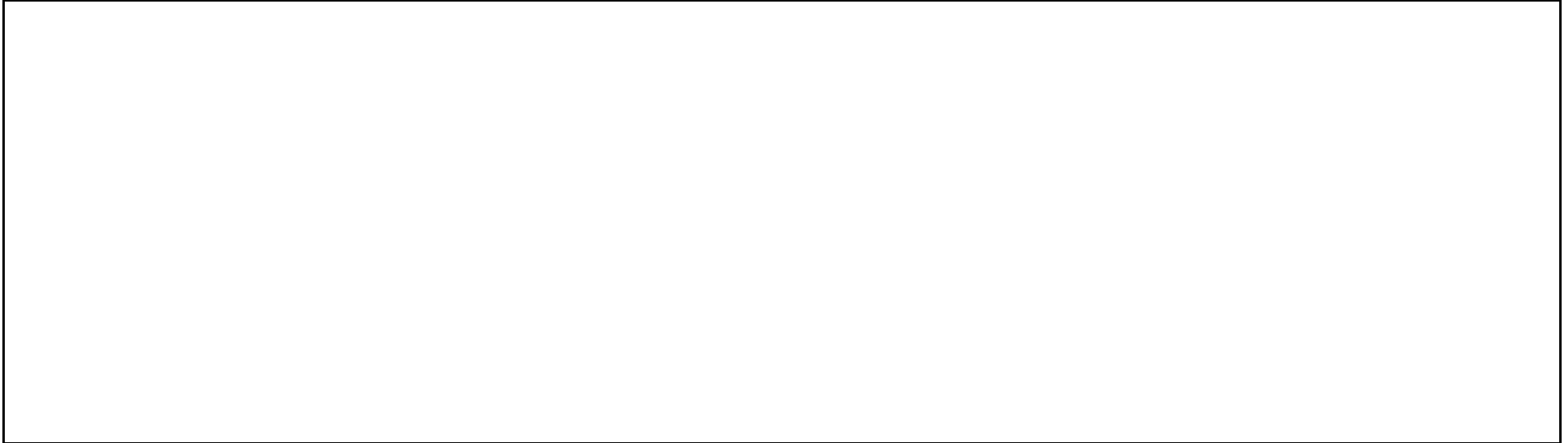
While we have no evidence that Lincoln’s First Lady had the St.Crispin’s Day speech performed, Lincoln was well acquainted with the words of Shakespeare. After the death of his son, Willie, Lincoln “weep convulsively after reciting the lament of Constance for her dead son” from Shakespeare’s King John:

“And, Father Cardinal, I have heard you say
that we shall see and know our friends in heaven.
If that be true, I shall see my boy again.”

Find phrases from the excerpt from Shakespeare’s St. Crispin’s Day that reflects key phrases from the Gettysburg Address.

“The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.”

The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.



--that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion.



